12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Thandans

291
864

earlier, but I give the information here as it was recorded by me at the time from the informant's statement.)

853

In spite of a child being fed at the breast very late, the habit of sucking a jump or a finger existed in Kerala as much as it does with us. Nani said that mothers did try to stop it, telling the child that it is bad, and threatening punishment should it persist. There were no substitutes given, such as rubber teats, and the habit was the natural derivative of breast suckling. When the children had teeth, they used them freely when feeding, and also pulled and scratched the breast with their hands. Boys and girls behaved similarly in this respect and she could notice no difference due to sex between them.

863
[854]

Diapers made of cotton cloth in which the child was wrapped were used for the first year and a half. Then the baby was taught the rudiments of sanitation and shown where and how to go. The mother was almost exclusively in charge of teaching the child this, but sometimes in exceptional circumstances (when she was in the polluting period of her menses), the father, the one most fond of the children, would take the task upon himself. Should the baby forget itself or disobey what it had been told, it would be beaten with a twig over the buttocks or threatened that it would be carried away by a madman or a cat or a dog.

[861]

865
[513]

Children slept together on the same mat on the floor of the house until the age of twelve. Aggression between them was quite marked at an early age, and Nani had already told me how the infants with teeth treated her when feeding. A new-born child caused the development of much jealousy among the elder children and they bit and scratched at this time even more than usual. Sridaran was the worst in this way of the four children she had had, and he was still the most aggressive of them all. He often threatened to drive his mother out onto the road and back to the house from whence she came, and accompanied his threats with kicks. He never dared, however, to say such things to his fathers, and showed a marked preference for Narayana, corresponding in this to what Panju had told me about presumed physiological paternity. He seemed to resent any interference from his elder father, especially when the latter insisted on his going to school. He had been known to refuse point blank to go there.

[856]

Raghavan, although very young and quieter now, was pretty bad, too, in the way that he fought, bit and scratched his mother. He was late in walking and talking and had really only just learned to do these things. Madhavan spoke very early, earlier than all of them; at the age of five months, he could already make himself understood with words. Nani

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Fig. 17. An aboriginal Parayan woman with her child, in the Zamorin's colony at Chunangad, south Malabar.

[P 238-H]